the Railway Administration. Action on the immediate recommendations given in the Preliminary Report has been initiated by the Railway.

Rishikesh-Dehradun link Railway line

3513. SHRI TARLOCHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for Rishikesh-Dehradun link Railway line;

(b) whether his Ministry is aware that Rishikesh is the most popular pilgrimage and tourist centre;

(c) whether there is any further plan to have more trains going to Rishikesh or attaching compartments with other trains which go upto Haridwar; and

(d) whether there is any proposal to have more shuttle services between Rishikesh and Haridwar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir, However, Rishikesh and Dehradun are already connected by Railway line *via* Raiwala.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

Increase in running time of trains

3514. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been increase in the original running time of various Shatabdi and Jan Shatabdi express trains over the years;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the increase in running time of these trains which are meant to connect major cities in minimum possible time; and

(c) wheat steps can be initiated to restore the original status of these trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Running times of some of the Shatabdi/Jan Shatabdi trains have been increased marginally. However, some of the Shatabdi/Jan Shatabdi trains have also been speeded up.

(b) Due to provision of additional stoppages, speed restrictions and other operational factors.

(c) Steps like increasing the sectional speed, eliminating the speed restrictions, utilization of high powered locomotives, rationalization of stoppages etc. are taken for speeding up of trains, which are onging exercise.

Modernisation of stations under Southern Railway

3515. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of railway stations under Southern Railway which have been selected for modernisation as announced in the last Railways budget;

(b) the names of stations where work has already been commenced;

(c) whether this include Thiruvananthapuram Central railway station; and

(d) if so, the details of works proposed at Thiruvananthapuram Central railway station and the items of work under way?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) On Sourthern Railways, 25 and 22 stations were identified during 2006-07 and during 2007-08 respectively for modernisation work. The details of the stations identified are as under:

During 2006-07

1. Chengalpattu	2. Katpadi	3. Tambaram
4. Chennai Egmore (II Entry)	5. Tiruttani	6. Erode
7. Coimbatore	8. Palghat	9. Calicut
10. Mangalore	11. Ernakulam	12. Trichur
13. Quilon	14. Thiruvanathapuram Central	15. Kanniyakumari
16. Puducherry	17. Vridhachalam	18. Tiruchchirappalli
19. Thanjavur	20. Kumbakonam	21. Dindigul
22. Madurai	23. Tirunelveli	24. Tuticorin
25. Virudhunagar		

During 2007-08

1. Chennai Beach	2. Ambur	3. Jolapettai
4. Puttur	5. Sullurpetta	6. Salem
7. Tiruppur	8. Shoranur	9. Kannur
10. Thalassery	11. Ernakulam	12. Kottayam
13. Chengannur	14. Nagercoil	15. Srirangam
16. Mayiladuthurai	17. Thiruvarur	18. Nagapattinam
19. Rameshwaram	20. Karaikkudi	21. Palani
22. Ramanathapuram.		

Work of modernisation at all the above 47 railways stations has already been commenced.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Details of completed and on-going works are given in the Statement.

Statement

Details of completed modernisation works at Thiruvananthapuram Central railway stations.

(i) Renewal of roofing of foot over bridge with polycarbonate sheets and painting of station building;

(ii) Improvements to flooring in waiting hall and improvements to walkway of the foot over bridge;

(iii) Provision of cushion chairs;

(iv) Provision of stainless steel chairs;

(v) Improvement to lighting in concourse, Public Reservation System and waiting hall;

(vi) Improvement to concourse and Passenger Care Centre;

(vii) Provision of Coach Guidance System for two platforms;

(viii) Paving the prime area of platform No. 1 with granite slabs, provision of benches, platform sinks, etc.

(ix) Provision of Reverse Osmosis (RO) Plant for water purification; and

(x) Provision of plasma based train arrival/departure information display boards.

Following modernisation works have also been planned for completion by 30th September, 2008;

(1) Construction of second Booking Office near Parcel Office for shifting the existing Booking office;

(2) Provision of new Waiting room at Quilon-end and conversion of existing upper class waiting room into air-conditioned room; and

(3) Improvement to Information Centre.

Decline in acquisition of wagons

3516. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a sharp decline in the acquisition of railway wagons for the past ten years;

(b) if so, the reasons for the same; and

(c) the implications, if any, because of this decline?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Doubling and electrification of rail lines in Gujarat

3517. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR RUPANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the criteria for double track railways line and electrification;

(b) by when the second ralways track is likely to be constructed on Viramgam-Rajkot line; and

(c) by when the Ahmedabad-Rajkot railway line would be fully electrified?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Doubling and electrification of tracks are considered primarily on traffic volumes, economic viability and operational necessity and availability of funds. As per as Viramgam-